

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

The rejection of Claims 1-5, 9 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. §1 103(a) based on Japanese Patent 4-44581 and Basickes et al. is respectfully traversed.

The deficiencies of the clamp disclosed in the Japanese reference are described in the paragraph bridging pages 4-5 of Applicants' specification as part of the background of the present invention. As pointed out in Applicants' specification, in the clamp of the Japanese reference a higher antivibration effect can be obtained only by increasing the thickness of the antivibration resin material. However, increase of thickness of the antivibration resin material causes a problem of deterioration in the object holding force due to resulting increased softness or flexibility, which is likely to cause wobbling movements of the object in the curved wall.

Independent Claim 1 recites, inter alia, that the curved wall has an inner wall surface formed with a plurality of elongated rigid ribs protruding inward and extending in the width direction of the curved wall, which is the longitudinal direction of the elongated object, while being spaced apart from each other in the circumferential direction of the curved wall, and both the inner wall surface and the ribs of the curved wall have a coating thereon of an antivibration material made of soft resin.

Claim 1 has been amended to avoid any question concerning a method limitation. The recitation that both the inner wall surface and the ribs of the curved wall are coated with an antivibration material made of soft resin was not intended to recite how the antivibration material is applied. In any case, as Claim 1 is amended there is a clear structural recitation of a coating that cannot be interpreted as a method step limitation.

By virtue of the invention recited in Claim 1, sufficient holding force is provided along with a high antivibration function. This is not true of the Japanese reference.

The rejection proposes to compensate for deficiencies of the Japanese reference by incorporating teachings of Basickes et al. However, the Basickes et al. reference does not cure the deficiencies of the Japanese reference pointed out above.

It is apparent that the proposed combination of the Japanese reference and Basickes et al. does not teach or suggest the invention recited in Claim 1, which provides superior results not contemplated by the prior art. Accordingly, Claim 1 and the claims dependent thereon should be allowed. Claims 3 and 4 have been amended for consistency with amended Claim 1. Dependent Claims 2 and 4 recite additional features that distinguish patentably from the prior art.

Independent Claim 9, like Claim 1, has been amended to recite a coating of antivibration material as a clear

structural limitation. The claim now recites, inter alia, that the inner surface of the curved wall and the ribs have a coating thereon of an antivibration material that is softer than a material of which the curved wall and the ribs are formed. It is apparent from the discussion of Claim 1 vis-a-vis the prior art that Claim 9 distinguishes patentably from the prior art and that this claim and dependent Claims 10 and 11 should be allowed. Claim 10 has been amended to recite a coating as a structural feature. This feature further distinguishes patentably from the prior art.

This application is now believed to be clearly in condition for allowance.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge to Deposit Account No. 50-1165 any fees under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 and 1.17 that may be required by this paper and to credit any overpayment to that Account. If any extension of time is required in connection with the filing of this paper and has not been requested separately, such extension is hereby requested.

Respectfully submitted,

NHS:lmb

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